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Jeremiah Gage to Patience W. S. Gage (23 May 1861)

Jeremiah Gage

Patience W. S. Gage

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Warpers Ferry

May 30th 1861.

My dear Ma.

I have forgotten whether or not
I have written to you from this place; - at
any rate I have a business document and I pre-
fer spending it in this way. We have been here
some four days. - have our tents all up and
everything moving smoothly on. I have been very
well, with the exception of a little sprain in
Syndesmy, & some cold that I am yet trouble
with. I like the life much better than I
expected. - have been driving frequently, & can
now stain my hand with the sweat of
them, - and am in the fatigue of carrying arms
and walking. - but soon to be as hardy as a
mule. We have known when we shall have
a fight, if at all. Many think we may meet
the enemy at any time, - in my own opinion
we will not fight soon - and if we do not
fight by the 1st of July. I believe that some pro-
posals of peace will be made by the Federal

Congress, or else we will have war immediately. There are some 15,000 troops in and around this, and all is nothing but a military camp. The beating of drums, the ringing of bells & the commands of the officers, come to us from every side. The sweet-toned voices of fair women, are supplanted by the harsh commands of officers & the noisy business of the kitchen is replaced by blankets and straw. - all this however goes very well, & we are all satisfied. What others come of us must, is, that we have left our girls behind us, with the prospect of not seeing them for a good long time, - but they will be rejoiced when we do come back. This is a very nice place as far as the town is concerned, but above all there is the most insignificant security very close over head - a high mountainous country with the finest water the earth can produce. It is a splendid place to spend the summer. Situated at the junction of the Potomac & Shenandoah rivers - lies the

Most beautiful Steams - about three hun-
dred yards wide - with rock bottoms &
not more than three feet deep, perfectly
clear. can see the bottom at any place.
In description, can give you an adequate
idea of its beauty. it must be seen to be
properly appreciated. I have been round to
the Arsenal where they turn out 40 guns
per day. although most of the machinery
has been taken down and removed to
Richmond. I have seen where John Brown
was taken the portions of the arsenal
that were burnt by his men. Some 75,000
stand of arms were consumed, which was
a great loss to Va. as they were sufficient
to have armed the State. Yesterday our
cook was sick and some of us had
to try our hands at getting dinner. I
attempted to make the biscuit and you
ought to have seen them. My friend Mr.
Simon poured the water in, and made
the dough too soft, and we had no more

How so. I had to work it up the best
I could, then I put it in the oven so
thickly that I thought it would never
go down, and on the inside it was
done, until I split it open. I have
a chance to send this to the office
so must come, because it will
send much better. You must
write to me at this place, and
direct to the care of Capt W. B.
Loring. If you have
a fight you may expect to hear
a good report from me, & from
our company.

Yours affectionately

John D. D.

Darius